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*of the*  
NORTH



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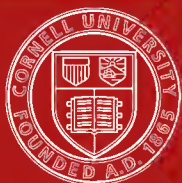
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*BY THE SAME AUTHOR*

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IDYLLS OF GREECE    *Series One*

IDYLLS OF GREECE    *Series Two*

THE WOMAN WHO COULD

THE LEGEND OF LOVE

IDAS AND MARPESSA

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*OUT OF THE NORTH*







With love to you and  
yours  
Joaquin Miller  
Davenport 98

JOAQUIN MILLER





*OUT OF THE  
NORTH*

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*By  
Howard V. Sutherland*

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*With a Foreword by  
Joaquin Miller*

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*To* FREDERICK H. RANDALL



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## FOREWORD

---

SONGS from a far-away world; a cry  
S from another sphere. To those of us  
who once experienced the still and  
pitiless cold, a cry terribly suggestive  
of the horror-charged gloom, of the icy silence  
as unbroken as that of unfathomable deeps, of the  
stern and uncompromising individuality of a dis-  
turbed and vengeful North.

Yet one is also reminded that, even in the  
Klondyke, in due season the brooding spruces are  
awakened from slumber by the songs of happy-  
throated songsters, that the melancholy of the  
forest is brightened by gay flowers. The weight  
is then lifted from men's hearts; singing is heard  
in the cabin, and the sound of laughter on the  
trail. When the mighty Yukon is open to the  
Behring Sea, the far North is in touch with the  
world and men are glad.

But the Arctic summer is short-lived. The  
days of the bird and the flower and the rippling  
creeks are numbered. Soon the sky turns grey,  
the wind chants the sun's requiem, the snow falls;  
and then returns the cold, the gloom, the feeling  
of isolation, the indescribable terror.

I heard these songs sung in the Arctic, the  
singer at my side—these songs of nature, songs of  
hope, home, heart. They seem a part of my life.  
I heard them as the cry of a lone bird in the vast  
silence of eternal snows.

JOAQUIN MILLER

THE HEIGHTS, CAL.

Nov. 15th '99



---

## *The Northern Light*

---

WHO drapes that mystic veil across  
that everbrooding sky?

Who hues it with a soul of pearl? Who  
draws it to and fro?

Who breathes upon it with the breath that  
makes it glow and die,

Lighting that crystal river, those mount-  
ains cowl'd with snow?



---

*In Winter*

---

**B**ENEATH the snow the mosses sleep  
Amid the forest's silence;  
Above, the stately birches keep  
Unbroken vigils.

The spruce trees dream of summer hours  
And birds that carolled sweetly,  
Of gentle winds and smiling flowers  
That died too quickly.



---

## *Lyric*

---

TELL me, tell me, gentle stars,  
    Ever watchful, ever bright,  
From your stations in the sky  
    Do you see my love to-night?

White the snow beneath my feet,  
    Whiter far her holy breast;  
Peaceful are the mighty woods,  
    But her eyes are soft with rest.

Sweet the scent of spruce and pine,  
    Sweeter, though, her fragrant breath;  
Tell her, tell her, gentle stars,  
    I am hers alone till death.



---

## *Dark Days*

---

**T**HE sun has left his throne,  
The sky is leaden-hued;  
The hopeless winds bemoan,  
In icy aisles, their fate.

All day the shadows press  
About the forest's nuns,  
That dream in loneliness  
Their dreams of birds and spring.



---

## *The Unanswerable*

---

O SOMBRE skies that ever mourn,  
O silent skies so grey and stern,  
Are ye the curtains of that bourne  
Where we at last our fate must learn?

Is it behind your gloomy veil  
The Judge with Book of Judgment stands?  
Where we must pass, with faces pale,  
Awaiting judgment at His hands?

O sombre skies that frown all day  
Upon us hopeless, hapless men,  
When Death shall beckon us away  
What happens then? What happens then?



---

## *Vain Dreams*

---

**T**HE trees, my sisters, robed in white,  
Now dream of spring;  
Of sun-lit day and fragrant night,  
Of birds that sing.

They little think that I can tell  
About their pain;  
They do not know I dream as well  
A dream most vain.



---

## *December*

---

**B**ENEATH a shroud of unpolluted white,  
The frozen hills lie silent and asleep;  
And moveless spruce and ghostly birches  
keep  
Their silent vigils through the endless night.  
The frozen creeks, long voiceless, partly  
veiled  
'Neath drifting snow, dream fondly of  
the trees;  
Within the woods no bird's song and no  
breeze  
Make wondrous music when the skies have  
paled.  
The kingly sun ne'er sends his laughing rays  
To wake the hills and warm the trees  
and streams;  
His face is hid, and hid are now the beams  
That woke the world on long-dead summer  
days.  
The patient moon with all her silent train  
Of maiden stars patrols the roads on high,  
And watches well all things that sleep-  
ing lie  
Till Spring's first song shall waken them again.  
The white world sleeps, and all is very still,  
Except when rises on the frosted air  
From out its chilly and forbidding lair  
A lone wolf's howl, long-drawn and terrible.



---

## *The Unassuageable*

---

I SOMETIMES hear among the snow-  
clad trees  
The lone wind chanting solemn symphonies.

I sometimes smell, while yet the woods  
are bare,  
The breath of unborn blossoms in the air.

I am at times aware of gentle sighs  
There where the creek, ice-fettered, dream-  
ing lies.

I sometimes witness when the air is still  
Unearthly splendors on the white-robed hill.

I sometimes read in flashing stars at night  
Mysterious promises of future light.

But what can make a spirit's anguish less,  
Or ease a heart's eternal loneliness?



---

*Father Judge, S. J.*

---

**H**ERE was a man, a humble minister  
Beloved of all in northern latitudes  
Who knew the value of the kingly heart  
That beat beneath his worn and priestly coat.

A soldier he, who ne'er forsook his post;  
Whose actions were more numerous than  
words;

His soul was God's; his heart and body  
man's—

Nothing his own except our gratitude.

Worn e'er his time by hardship none may  
know

Who shirked the bitter schooling of the  
North,

He passed away, and now forever stands  
As close to God as gentle Damien.



---

## *The Light-o'-Love*

---

THE dogs were whining; they sensed  
too well

The load upon the sled;  
The rough-hewn box with the light-o'-love—  
A girl, 'twas said.

A week ago, at the Palace Bar,  
She sang the songs of France;  
But many a heart is lead the while  
The feet must dance.

Kisses she gave and kisses she took,  
Sinned for her daily bread;  
But all we knew as we eyed the box  
Was: she was dead.

We placed upon it (How much it hurt  
Only the good God knows!)  
A gaud she had worn in her dusky hair—  
A paper rose.

A crumpled thing that seemed beautiful  
To lonely, broken men,  
Hinting of fairer flowers and things  
Beyond our ken.

We thought of her as we closed her door  
As somebody's little child;  
As somebody's darling, lost, long lost,  
But undefiled.



The grey above us, the white beneath;  
Chill silence everywhere;  
Yet deep in our hearts we knew that God  
Was also there.

We knew, far better than others know  
Whose ways are bright and glad,  
His judgments are very merciful  
On good and bad.

Our little sister was now at peace.  
The snow began to fall.  
The flakes soon hid that gift of ours  
Beneath their pall.

Under the white, white flakes the rose,  
Crumpled, tawdry and red;  
Hinting the pity which all men need  
When they are dead.

\* \* \*

The dogs still whined as they dragged the  
sled  
To where the spruces dream;  
And there we left her, a wayward child,  
At rest in Him.



---

## *Two Quests*

---

**E**VERY day I watch men go  
Up the trail  
Seeking gold. It is a show  
Worth the watching; much I know  
About the game.

In the dead of night they creep  
Past my door;  
But I hear them in my sleep,  
And I pity. Very steep  
The road to Fame.



---

## *The Return of the Sun*

---

**W**INTER is passing. The inconstant  
sun—

Neglectful lover, therefore doubly dear—  
Kisses the stern, white faces of the hills,  
Melting their hearts to tenderness again;  
Kisses the earth, still shiv'ring 'neath its  
shroud,  
And whispers it of blossoms to be born.  
Kisses the boughs and lures the fresh young  
leaves,  
Spring's verdant heralds, from their hiding  
place;  
Kisses the trees and tells them of bright  
birds  
Seeking new homes for merry families.

Winter is passing. The inconstant sun—  
Neglectful lover, therefore doubly dear—  
Enters the hearts of long despondent men,  
Bidding them smile and be consoled again;  
Enters their souls and whispers them of God,  
Of distant homes and friends that pray for  
them;  
Enters our cabins and dispels the gloom  
Of soundless days and never-ending nights;  
Enters our eyes and bids us rise and see  
Winter's interment, mourn'd by laughing  
Spring.



---

## *Klondyke Roses*

---

WHEN melts at last the lingering snow  
In sunny days of May or June,  
Amid the velvet mosses grow  
Shy roses, fragrant-smelling.  
A fated sisterhood is theirs,  
They sigh their souls out wistfully;  
No bee makes love to them or hears  
Their tender love a-telling.

They dream, perhaps, of distant lands,  
(O lands, that seem as far-off spheres;)  
Of love-lit eyes and tender hands  
That pluck far happier roses.  
But while they dream the days pass by  
And August comes with ebon nights,  
And sombre is September's sky—  
And then their sad life closes.



---

## *A Song for the Return of Birds*

---

HASTE, little songsters, and return  
To your nests in the silent wood;  
The birches are lonely and they yearn  
For your twittering brotherhood.  
The leaves are green on the wakened trees  
And the snow has left the moss;  
The sighing breeze  
With its symphonies  
Suggests our greatest loss—  
Haste, little birds, haste home!

Haste little songsters, for the Spring  
Has come with her laughing train  
Of radiant blossoms; and now the King  
Is here, and the pattering rain.  
The nights are warm and the days are long,  
There is no more ice or frost;  
And oh! we long  
For a songbird's song,  
For a music the woods have lost—  
Haste, little birds, haste home!



---

## *The Forest Cotillion*

---

WHEN the wind is joyous-hearted it  
    stirs the graceful spruces,  
And they nod at one another and toss their  
    arms in abandon;  
Then they sway their supple bodies in wonderful undulations,  
Keeping a perfect time with the wind's  
    mysterious music.

Then the watchmen of the forest, the solemn  
    and silent birches,  
Bend stiffly their stately heads, saluting their  
    laughing sisters;  
And the alders wake from slumber, and the  
    willows grieve no longer  
When the wild wind woos the stream and  
    sets the trees a-dancing.



---

## *The Spruces of the Forest*

---

UNHAPPY trees, beneath whose graceful branches

No lovers walk, no children ever play;  
Who never hear the sound of girlish laughter,  
But pass in gloom your silent lives away;  
I wonder if ye heed me as I press  
My heart to yours in utter loneliness.

I wonder if ye see me as I wander  
Along the trail no feet but mine e'er tread;  
I wonder if ye hear me when I murmur  
The name of one who might as well be dead  
So far away, so very far is she—  
I wonder if ye heed and pity me?



---

## *The Wild Lover*

---

**S**WAY your lithe arms, ye graceful trees,  
The wind is out a-wooing!  
Ye may be many, yet he sees  
A way to your undoing.

Ye need not fear,  
Though birds may hear  
Your whispers or your sighs;  
Or tell the night  
Of your delight—  
Nay, Nay, the birds are wise.

Your vestiture of maiden green  
Doth very well adorn ye;  
The wind will deem each one a queen,  
And woo. He dare not scorn ye!



---

## *Homeward Bound*

---

I HAVE ventured on many a journey,  
By land and sea ;  
And whether success or failure  
Was granted me,  
It mattered but very little—  
It is good to be Homeward Bound.

When thou bravest the final voyage,  
And thou must steer  
Across the mysterious ocean,  
Friend, have no fear ;  
There is only one port for the sailors  
When once they are Homeward Bound !



---

## *Approaching Night*

---

THE lower'd skies are grey; the trees  
are bare.

A week ago they gleam'd in splendid  
rows

Of gold and crimson; now in gaunt despair  
They stand like ghosts above new-fallen  
snows.

The world seems even greyer than the skies.

'Twas yesterday the homeward-honking  
geese

Fled as from death. They know too well  
what lies

Behind this sinister, foreboding peace!













